

## Retirement Ceremony

### Lt Col Douglas Blackledge

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. Please silence your cell phones. We are here today to pay tribute to Lt Col Douglas Blackledge on his retirement after over 22 years of service to the United States. The presiding officer today is Colonel Neil Eisen.

Joining Lt Col Blackledge today is his wife Suzanne as well as his father , Lt Col (retired) Michael Blackledge.

The presiding Officer is Colonel Neil Eisen, assigned to United States Northern Command and currently deployed to CENTCOM as the Office of the Defense Representative Pakistan's Liaison to United States Central Command

Additional guests include Mr. Nicholas Rocha, founder of the United Warrior Survivor Foundation. Thank you Nick for taking the time out of your busy schedule to be here. His foundation makes sure that the families of true fallen heroes are taken care of. Please look him up, as his foundation is a truly worthy cause.

**NARRATOR       WE ALSO EXTEND A VERY WARM WELCOME TO  
COMMANDERS, MISSION PARTNERS, CHIEFS, FIRST  
SERGEANTS, CIVIC LEADERS, COWORKERS, AND  
OTHER FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF LT COL  
BLACKLEDGE WHO HAVE TRAVELED AND TAKEN  
TIME TO ATTEND TODAY'S CEREMONY.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, please rise for the arrival of the official party and remain standing for the national anthem.

**Official Party    (Enter from waiting area to stage and stand in front of their seats)**

**Sound person    Plays National Anthem**

**Pres. Officer       "CENTER FACE" official party faces the audience and remains at attention.**

Ladies and Gentlement, please be seated and join me in welcoming Colonel Neil Eisen.

**Pres. Officer       (Proceed to podium for remarks)**

**Retiree                (Sit...good boy)**

**Pres. Officer        (Upon completion of comments, remain standing)**

Thank you Col Eisen.

Ladies and gentlemen, this retirement ceremony culminates 22 years of dedicated service to the United States and is a fitting farewell to Lt Col Blackledge. Please remain seated while Col Eisen retires Lt Col Blackledge.

**Presiding**

**Officer & (Rise and proceed to center stage and face the audience)**

**Retiree**

“By order of the Secretary of the Air Force, Effective 1 September 2014, Lt Col Douglas F. Blackledge is retired from active duty, and is hereby directed to proceed to his home of selection, AKA the Careywood Manor.”

Every person retiring from active duty is presented with a special certificate of retirement to commemorate their active duty career. Col Eisen will present the retirement certificate to Lt Col Blackledge.

The Certificate reads:

“Certificate of retirement from the Armed Forces of  
the United States of America

To all who shall see these presents\*, greetings:

This is to certify that Lt Col Douglas F. Blackledge,  
having served faithfully and honorably is to be  
retired from the United States Air Force on 1  
September, 2014.

Signed:

General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff

Brigadier General Nina M. Armagno, Commander,  
45th Space Wing.

Col Eisen: “Drippy, the floor is open to you”

## Drippy's Script:

Thank you, Colonel Eisen. I want to begin by expressing my thanks for you taking the time out of your schedule to be here for this. And HUGE thanks to my beautiful wife who (can/can't?) be here today... blah blah blah... (Flowers if she is able to attend). I also thank my Dad, Mike, for being here. And I know his phenomenal wife, Bonnie is working diligently to arrange what needs to be done for an upcoming family reunion. Kudos to my Dad for the unconditional love and support he has shown me over the years. He's also a former military man, graduating #1 in Mathematics from that Squid School also known as the United States Naval Academy in 1963, Fortunately, he saw the light and cross commissioned into the Air Force! So I would like to present an HSFS (Human Space Flight Support) coin and shirt, to express my grateful appreciation for everything you've done for me.

I'd like to take this opportunity to show you a short video that exemplifies the fact that for the majority of my career I was literally paid to

fly... and daily reached out to touch the face of God. (Play High Flight Video)

(Additional thanks and background on history with Col Eisen)

I will try to keep this brief. I have been honored to serve the American people with what I consider the greatest mission on earth: Combat Search and Rescue. Killing bad guys and saving the lives of the good guys. I have been honored to serve with some of the greatest warriors on earth. And I hope that as an Air Force, we keep that warrior mindset.

Many people have asked me what I'll be doing in my "post retirement life". Sept 1st, I'll set my alarm for the normal time at 06:30, then happily smile and roll over and go back to sleep. Then, about an hour later, I'll get on the 2 lane road known as Courtenay Parkway, and drive during rush hour at about 10 miles below the speed limit, since apparently that's what you do as a retiree. 😊

But seriously, I'm looking forward to my life with my beautiful wife, Suzanne. I'll be a full time

student getting my Master's Degree in Finance, taking full advantage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, and hope to eventually have my own business as a Certified Financial Planner or Analyst.

So I leave you all with my sincerest appreciation, and a final video that is a tribute to all of my brothers and sisters who are part of the CSAR community, both active and fallen. These things we do, that others may live.

Narrator: Ladies and Gentlemen, please feel free to join us in the back room for snacks and refreshments, and to congratulate Lt Col Doug Blackledge, USAF, retired.

(Col Eisen and Narrator initiate applause)

Cue CSAR video...

